

**Wellesley Public Schools
School Committee Meeting
September 2, 2020
Remote Online Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 pm. Those present included Chair Linda Chow, Vice Chair Melissa Martin, Secretary Catherine Mirick, members Jim Roberti and Sharon Gray; Superintendent David Lussier, Assistant Superintendent Joan Dabrowski and Cynthia Mahr; Technology Director Kathleen Director of Student Services Sarah Orlov; Human Resources Director Gayle McCracken

Ms. Chow announced that the meeting is being held remotely and recorded by local media and broadcast live by Wellesley Media.

PUBLIC COMMENT There were no callers.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Chow informed the Committee that local sports teams may be impacted by the current installation of tents on school fields. The tents will be used to accommodate student learning outdoors, as well as lunch and mask breaks. This information has been shared with the Recreation Department as well as the Playing Fields Task Force to inform youth sports schedules.

SCHOOL REOPENING UPDATES

Tentative Agreement with Wellesley Educators

Ms. Chow announced that over the past weekend, the Administration reached a tentative agreement with the Wellesley Educators Association. Dr. Lussier reviewed the negotiation process and acknowledged the efforts of those involved in this complicated work. The union is hosting a ratification vote on Friday morning and there is a Committee meeting scheduled for the afternoon for ratification of the contract.

The Committee thanked the entire Administrative team for all the work and time spent on this important process.

Update on Reopening Plans for Staff & Families

Dr. Lussier discussed the status of the return to school plans including the launching of the new Remote Learning School (RLS). In order to ensure proper placement of students and staff, parents must provide their final decision by September 3rd on whether their children will be participating the RLS or the hybrid model. Dr. Lussier indicated they are continuing to confirm staff's intent to return remotely or in the hybrid model.

Dr. Lussier reminded the community that the first day of school is September 16th, with all students starting in a remote learning setting.

Metrics and Other Collaboration with Board of Health

Ms. Chow reported she attended the Board of Health meeting earlier in the day to provide an update on testing and review key points of the reopening process, the overall metrics being considered and thresholds for reopening.

Update on Viral Testing Pilot Program

The Committee was joined by Katey Goehringer, one of the medical volunteers working on a pilot testing program for the WPS reopening who provided an update on the status of the program to date. The Request for Proposals has been sent out, with September 9th as the deadline for submissions. She hopes to have a vendor selected by the end of next week. The timeframe was reviewed for the pilot baseline testing which is planned to begin on September 24th. It was noted that the testing is mandated for staff and strongly recommended for students.

The Committee thanked Ms. Goehringer and her team for the work they are doing on this program, and also acknowledged the Wellesley Education Foundation for its fundraising work and generosity.

2020-21 WPS ACADEMIC CALENDAR - REVISED

Dr. Lussier reviewed the modifications to the 2020-21 academic calendar to address the remote start for all students on September 16th and starting in-person learning for hybrid model on October 1st and 2nd.

After a brief discussion, Ms. Chow entertained a motion to approve the revised 2020-21 WPS Academic Calendar as presented.

MOVED: Ms. Martin; SECONDED: Ms. Gray; ROLL CALL: Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Roberti - Yes

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

POLICIES UPDATES

After a brief discussion, Ms. Chow entertained a motion to approve the revised policies BDB, BEDD, BEDG, as presented at the August 25, 2020 meeting.

MOVED: Mr. Roberti; SECONDED: Ms. Gray; ROLL CALL: Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Roberti - Yes

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

After a brief discussion, Ms. Chow entertained a motion to approve Policy EBC, General Interim Policy on COVID-related issues as presented.

MOVED: Ms. Martin; SECONDED: Mr. Roberti; ROLL CALL: Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Roberti - Yes

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION REQUEST

The Committee discussed the need to include a supplemental budget request for COVID-related expenses in the warrant for the upcoming Special Town Meeting.

Dr. Lussier discussed the significant COVID-related investments being made in technology to increase 1:1 work, tent rentals, PPE costs including the retrofitting of facilities, as well as staffing costs that come with the creation of a new remote learning school. CARES Act funding has been used as much as possible, however, there will likely be significant net new costs in staffing of classroom teachers as well as special education services in a remote setting.

Ms. Mahr provided an overview of the allocation of CARES Act funding sources to date.

After a discussion, Ms. Chow entertained a motion to request that the Board of Selectmen include a supplemental appropriation request for the Schools on the warrant for the fall Special Town Meeting.

MOVED: Ms. Gray; SECONDED: Ms. Mirick; ROLL CALL: Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Mirick – Yes; Mr. Roberti - Yes

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kim Snapper, 38 Hillside Road, WPS parent, asked for clarification regarding whether in-person learning will start on October 1st if the viral testing program is not in place by then.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5:10 pm, Ms. Chow entertained a motion to adjourn.

MOVED: Mr. Roberti; SECONDED: Ms. Martin ROLL CALL: Ms. Mirick – Yes; Ms. Gray – Yes; Ms. Chow – Yes; Ms. Martin – Yes.; Mr. Roberti - Yes

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Mirick
Secretary

Documents and Exhibits Used:

None